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'I THOUGHT I AM MODERN SLAVERY': GIVING A VOICE TO TRAFFICKED WOMEN

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Abstract
This article addresses the lack of women's voices in the trafficking discourse by presenting women's perspectives on policy support. Undertaken as part of doctoral study at the University of Hull, the research asked formerly trafficked women about their experiences of trafficking and anti-trafficking professionals about their work with victims. This paper focuses on women's views on material help, health care and social support, a perceived culture of disbelief, and family rights. Their narratives highlight a continuation of exploitation through restrictive policy practices, and identify gaps in policy and provision around family reunification, loss of children, and rights for trafficked wives. The paper offers a review of women's experience against assistance stipulated in the Council of Europe (2005) Convention, and also the newer anti-trafficking measures introduced by the EU Parliamentary Directive (EUP, 2011). In this way, women's voicing of experience highlights the limitations of current policies and practices.

Keywords
Trafficked women; policy support; Council of Europe Convention; EU Directive; women's experience

Introduction

This paper presents experiences of policy support gathered between December, 2008, and February, 2010, from women who had been trafficked into the United Kingdom (UK). Undertaken as part of wider doctoral study at the University of Hull, formerly trafficked women were asked about their experiences of trafficking and anti-trafficking professionals about their work with victims. The research aim in talking policy with women was to understand how trafficking policy is experienced by women as policy subjects.

The last decade was 'golden' in terms of international-UK cooperation in human trafficking. On the 9th February, 2006, the UK signed the *Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons,* attached to the *United Nations Convention (2000) Against Transnational Organised Crime.* This statute defines trafficking as a serious and organised criminal process involving a person's movement by force or deception into exploitative or slavery-like practices (Article 3). On the 17th December, 2008, the UK subsequently ratified the *Council of Europe Convention (2005) on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings,* which sets out a Human Rights-led framework of responses for protecting and supporting the presumed victims of a trafficking crime.[3] Of particular relevance is Article 12, which endorses victims' rights to subsistence living through material, safe accommodation, and psychological supports; access to emergency medical treatment; any necessary translation and interpretation services; counselling and rights based information; and legal help (CoE, 2005: Article 12.1 a-e). This package of supports covering 'physical, psychological and social recovery' constitutes the minimum required of ratifying States and provides the policy structure used within fieldwork conversations.

Although this study predates UK endorsement of the European Union Directive (EUP, 2011) - which extends trafficking protection to additional exploitations, for example, of forced marriage - this paper considers the Convention and the Directive in tandem. This comparison is vital since the Directive leads on policy development, and because the new EU Directive and women's views resonate on so many levels. Comparisons are also imperative given a recognised absence of women's voices in the trafficking discourse, and especially in policy support. The purpose of this paper is to present women's perspectives on material help, health care and social support, a perceived culture of disbelieving victims, and family rights. In so doing, women's voices canvass some of the limitations in existing trafficking support.[4]

Before moving to methodology and findings, this paper argues the case for bringing women's voices to this debate.

Absent Voices

Scholars identify global and localised gaps in empirically-led research on the Protocol and the Convention (Salt, 2000; Laczko and Gozdziak, 2005; IOM, 2008). This gap is considered

[3] This was implemented on the 1st April, 2009.

[4] The UK was given a deadline of the 6th April, 2013, in which to implement the new EU Directive measures. The European Commission is tasked with assessing the extent of members' implementation on the Directive and has until 6th April, 2015, in which to complete its report.

particularly acute in trafficking research with female victims. As Brennan (2005:43) observes for survivors in the United States:

> '…they have been voiceless for different reasons: because of fear of reprisals from their traffickers, their stage in the recovery process, and concern that their community of co-ethnics will stigmatize them. Given these obstacles, it is possible that few ex-captives will ever step out from the anonymity of their case managers' offices, to give interviews to researchers, let alone public presentations or press conferences as part of anti-trafficking movement activities.'

This is not to suggest that there is no direct research or representation of survivors' voices. These exist, particularly where trafficking intersects with other more agentic migratory flows. For example, studies have researched experience at the intersection of sex trafficking and migrations for sex work (Andrijasevic, 2003; 2010; Agustin, 2005), at the nexus of economic migration and trafficking for forced labour (Bastia, 2005;[5] Skrivankova, 2006), and on transnational marriage in the context of trafficking (Stepnitz, 2009; De Angelis, forthcoming). Victims have also contributed to research on a specific aspect of trafficking experience. Focussing on studies which are either UK centric or UK inclusive, women have participated in research on their physical and psychological health needs (Zimmerman et al., 2003; 2006), trafficking and bonded labour in the UK (Kalayaan & Oxfam, 2008; Wittenburg, 2008); trafficking and migrant domestic work (Lalani, 2011), gendered exploitation (Dickson, 2004) and, more recently, the experiences of trafficked women who end up in custody (Hales & Gelsthorpe, 2012).

In stark contrast, policy evaluations of the Convention and trafficking support do not grant a voice to women, even as the consumers of trafficking services. Victims are not directly interviewed in either of the Anti-Trafficking Monitoring Group (ATMG, 2010; ATMG, 2012:20) appraisals, which defend the exclusion as 'unnecessary and possible secondary victimisation'. Nor do they feature in GRETA's (2012) evaluation of UK delivery.[6] Given that the safeguarding of victims is primary in policy, why is asking trafficked women what they think about policy so critical?

Firstly, it enables a degree of movement beyond what is typically known and claimed in the policy discourse. Women possess knowledge which remains hidden precisely because it is not sought after information. Reflecting on her counter-trafficking research with women supported by Poppy and Eaves Housing,[7] Dickson (2004:1) writes:

[5] Bastia's paper addresses teenage migration but is included for its contribution on intersectionality and voice.

[6] GRETA stands for 'Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings'. GRETA conducted its first evaluation of UK delivery on the Convention in October, 2011, and released its report in September, 2012.

[7] The Poppy Project and Eaves Housing provide accommodation and support services to women trafficked for sexual exploitation into the UK.

> 'Many of these experiences will not have been raised by women in any other setting because these are not the experiences that are useful to statutory services in terms of prosecution.'

Secondly, consumer perspectives better connect policy supports with victim-related needs. How one interviews women may be contested (Oakley, 1981; Oakley, 2005), but interviewing women is long recognised for reaching subjective experience valuable for socio-political improvement (Reinharz, 1983; 1992; Mies, 1983; Oakley, 1989; 1992; Kelly, Burton & Regan, 1994). Oakley's work on social support and motherhood (1992:327), for example, demonstrates a beneficial policy outcome from researching women's perspectives on mothering:

> 'The provision of sympathetic listening support through continuity of care, which is what women have been requiring whenever anyone has thought to ask them, is a more effective way to promote their health and that of their babies than most of the medical interventions carried out in the name of ante-natal 'care'.'

Thirdly, far from constituting secondary exploitation, Morris (1997:29) embodies a far greater harm in denying a voice to survivors of suffering. As Morris explains:

> 'Voice is what gets silenced, repressed, pre-empted, denied, or at best translated into an alien dialect, much as clinicians translate a patient's pain onto a series of units on a grid of audio-visual descriptors. Indeed, voice ranks among the most precious human endowments that suffering normally deprives us of, removing far more than a hope that others will understand or assist us. Silence and the loss of voice may eventually constitute or represent for some who suffer a complete shattering of the self.'

In presenting women's perspectives on trafficking support, this paper can be read as adding women's absent voices to policy research.

Methodology

Accessing Participants and Understanding Complex Experience

Given that formerly trafficked women are hard to access, a snowball sampling of anti-trafficking projects and networks was key in sourcing participants (Atkinson and Flint, 2001). This search generated twenty four participants whose movements included trafficking, a mixture of smuggling and trafficking,[8] or a forced migration. Women with a forced migration are economic migrants whose journeys cross other forms of movement ending in slavery-like practices. For example, one woman sought help from a smuggler to escape persecution in her home country and arrived in the UK without documentation and in debt bondage. Within this participant group, trafficking exploitations fell into three

[8] Although trafficking and smuggling are legally distinct, the legal distinctions merge when the smuggled person is exploited at any stage between recruitment and arrival (Goodey, 2008:422)

categories – sexual exploitation, forced marriage,[9] and forced labour – though, as with movement, some women experience more than one form of exploitation. For example, one participant was trafficked into a forced marriage at home and for labour exploitation in a factory. Another woman was trafficked for forced marriage and sold for prostitution amongst her husband's acquaintances. Such diversity in movement and exploitation contextualise the complexities vexing the identification and assessment of victims of trafficking (VoTs) in trafficking support.

Sample Profile and Choice of Methods

Women in this sample were aged between twenty two and forty two and possessed fifteen nationalities between them: Algerian, Bangladeshi, British Pakistani, Chinese, Gambian, Indian, Iraqi, Kenyan, Moldovan, Nigerian, Pakistani, Somalian, Sudanese, Turkish, and Ukrainian. With the exception of Algeria, Turkey, and a British born woman of Pakistani ethnicity, all participants originated from top sending countries for UK trafficking during the fieldwork period (SOCA, 2009/10:42). Additionally, China and Pakistan also featured in the top ten asylum producing countries at the time, with Iraq occupying the second top producing country for the UK in 2008 (Asylum Support Partnership, 2009). All participant women were mothers. Some had children left behind in their home country and/or born to British husbands during a forced marriage, or smuggled over with them. With the shortest and longest stay in the UK at one and seven years respectively, most of these formerly trafficked women had been in the country between twelve and thirty- six months. The two women who were resident longest in the UK were content with their immigration status. The longest resident had indefinite leave to remain and the second longest resident had leave to remain grounded in humanitarian protection (Immigration Rules: Part 11) and was hopeful of receiving indefinite leave. The rest had either refused or been refused a VoT status and were dependent on anti-trafficking projects and women-centred charities for help, either as asylum applicants or exiles fearing reprisals and re-trafficking if returned home.[10]

Seventeen women from this sample took part in a focus group, suited to researching women's imposition of meaning on gendered experience (Wilkinson, 1998). Seven women requested individual interviews, also effective in studying experience from the perspective of the individual (Fontana and Frey, 2000). These were semi-structured (SSI), for greater space to explore personal narratives and their meaning. A grounded approach was applied to both data sets for key issues in lived experience. Whilst thematic analysis identified aspects in Article 12 which were core to women, the application of open or intuitive coding on responses (Charmaz, 2002) enabled commonalities and differences – as played out in women's lives - to surface.

[9] Forced marriage in the context of trafficking is one where a process of deceit or coercion is used to move a woman away from home for sexual / domestic servitude as a wife. In trafficking for marriage, the terms forced and servile are interchangeable. This paper uses the term forced.

[10] This helps to explain the impact of asylum policies in the lives of trafficked persons.

Ethical Issues

Gatekeepers were vigilant in protecting trafficked women from research harms.[11] Prior to face-to-face meetings with participants, gatekeepers relayed women's anxieties over consent, confidentiality and anonymity. Gatekeepers went through the research contract with women, which they signed in advance of interviews. The contract gave women permission to withdraw at any point and without explanation. It allowed SSI women to choose an alias and/or be classified as SSIs, and preserved the anonymity of focus group women through their identification as focus group members. The contract provided a further guarantee that women's case histories would not be disclosed to any other agency.

Whilst interpreters and after-care support were central to the granting of ethics approval by the University of Hull, Watts (2006) theorises the research interview as a therapeutic opportunity, making counselling skills a pre-requisite in good ethical practice. In light of my lack in counselling skills, unforeseen offers from gatekeepers to refer women to in-house counsellors and use their bilingual interpreters (Thomson et al., 1999), raised the quality of communication and post-interview care beyond my single capacity to gift. Knowing that women had access to these professional services eased my 'ethical hangover' with using exploited people for research (Lofland & Lofland, 1995:28). Two women chose to engage directly with me: one following two months of email exchange and the other after numerous mobile-phone conversations. Both these women had a good command of spoken English and neither requested a formal interpreter or brought a friend along to interpret. In terms of their after-care, the first had access to support through her volunteering work and the second to pastoral care from her college, although all participants were offered an after-care phone call from me. All SSI women exercised choice over interview venues, choosing a project room or a coffee house where they felt safe and in control of the research process. The focus group took place in premises housing numerous social and charitable projects, where women could also feel safe.

Bias

The involvement of gatekeepers brought its own bias to this study. Women rescued and supported by particular programmes reflect the profiles of their supporting projects (Tyldum & Brunovskis, 2005). This explains the sample biases in sexual exploitation and forced marriage. These, in turn, make findings appear more representative of survivor experience than is the case had projects with other remits taken part. As Bosworth et al. (2011:776) suggest, a correspondence approach to researching 'the direct experience of those we wish to understand' (as in the two women above) offers an alternate gateway into trafficking experience with some victims of trafficking, and could help with this bias. In her paper on coping with bias, Tyldum (2008:28) suggests all VoT research carries 'some kind of bias and limitation' and all 'give potentially interesting and valuable data.' Following the claims made for qualitative policy research with refugees (Tait, 2006:135), the experiences of participant women bring 'complement and supplement' to existing knowledge of trafficking supports and their delivery.

[11] For wider discussion of institutional gatekeepers in trafficking, see Bosworth (2011).

Findings and Discussion

Thematic analysis of interviews identified four central themes pertinent in survivors' experiences. These are a lack of material support and its effects, experiencing health care and social support, facing a culture of disbelief, and losing rights to a family and children. An application of open coding - on these four themes - raised commonalities and differences within women's experiences.

Lack of Material Support and its Effects

A lack of adequate material support is a fundamental issue for persons formerly trafficked. With the exception of two women (the British born woman of Pakistani ethnicity and the person with indefinite leave to remain), having no recourse to public funds is their financial reality. 'No Recourse to Public Funds' (NRPF) is a UK Border Agency classification which denies welfare benefits (including income support, child benefit, disability allowance), Local Authority housing, and UKBA asylum support to any person deemed unlawfully present in the UK (NRPF, 2006). The impact of 'no recourse' is typically one of living hand to mouth:

> 'The Home Office took two years to process my application and I had no recourse to public funds. A charity took me in and they told Social Services, who gave me some emergency money every week just to help feed and dress my daughter. I lived like this for two and a half years.' (SSI-3: Indian woman: trafficked for marriage and labour)

A link between poverty and mental ill-health also surfaces in trafficking discussions on 'no recourse'. Fewer post-trafficked women attribute their continuing depression and suicidal thoughts to recurring memories of trafficking than to living in enforced poverty:

> 'I said to myself: Oh, I'm tired. I've been through so much only to live like this [no money, no say]. I can't do it anymore! I were on medication for depression and when it got to night I couldn't sleep…standing by the window, sweating, my life taking its toll on me.' (SSI-4: Somalian woman: smuggled, then trafficked for labour)

> 'I was desperate! I had no recourse to public funds. Then [named charity] just helped me (pause) gave me some practical help (pause). This really gave me life [the will] to pick myself up and go on living.' (SSI-5: Gambian woman: trafficked for sex)

Women perceive the daily effects of living with 'no recourse' as a continuation of their exploitation. Amongst SSI women, this is conveyed using the language of slavery. During interview, many women described their trafficking ordeal as a form of slavery. For example, SSI-2 referred to herself as 'a victim of human slavery', SSI-3 as having been 'treated as a slave', and SSI-1 as having been 'held in slavery'. These women view 'no recourse' as replacing slavery-like trafficking practices (of not being paid for labour and having no control over their lives), with a new mechanism of economic enslavement. After her transnational forced marriage broke down, SSI-7 (from India) explained:

> 'I thought I would never be poor or on the streets and here I am. I had no money, no work, and with a son to support. Sometimes I wiped tables to get cash, another time I gave out leaflets to strangers in the street. But every time it was long hours and hard work and I was given very little and felt so exhausted. It was like they owned me. I thought I am modern slavery.'

Discussion

In this study, women's experience of acute destitution resonates with those of asylum seekers and refugees in two distinctive ways. Firstly, several trafficking accounts reflect a relationship between poverty and mental ill-health, noted in asylum experience (McColl et al., 2008; Lewis, 2009). Secondly, other slavery-related narratives portray how limited welfare and working rights in the asylum process (Aspinall and Watters, 2010; Burnett and Whyte, 2010) also push trafficked people back into highly exploitative working situations. Granted, the relationship of trafficking to slavery is a contested one (Bales et al., 2009; O'Connell Davidson, 2010) and trafficked women's experience cannot escape the imagery of sex slaves or the rhetoric of modern slavery. Nonetheless, by applying the language of slavery to lives post-trafficking, women emphasise how 'no recourse' to money (whether through welfare or via legal/documented employment) increases their vulnerability to economic exploitation.

In new research, Lewis et al. (2013:3) establish a link between acute destitution amongst asylum seekers and increased susceptibility to 'severely exploitative labour, including forced labour'. Participant voices not only reflect the negative impact of 'no recourse' in the daily lives of trafficked persons. Crucially, they also raise the imperative for policy exchange across displaced groups, in order to redress the effects that restrictive asylum policies have on the lives of formerly trafficked persons.

With regard to 'no recourse', neither the Convention nor the EU Directive improves women's position. Neither obliges states to provide for victims who (for whatever reason) refuse a VoT assessment, or who are refused VoT status following formal assessment (EUP, 2011: paragraph 21). Participants in the focus group asked after an appeals process. As observed in GRETA's first official evaluation of UK delivery on the Convention, there is no appeal process against formal decisions at any stage, only judicial review displaying a low success rate:

> 'According to information provided by the British authorities, 17 cases have reached the application stage of judicial review; of those that were granted permission by the court, two decisions were overturned following a full hearing.' (GRETA, 2012:50/214)

Experiencing Health Care and Social Support

When discussing their health care and social support needs, participant women prioritise continuity of care over personal symptoms or individual want. One explanation for its significance lies in the connection drawn by women between having social relationships and feeling safe. Without exception, all women become culturally and / or socially isolated post-trafficking, either through physical separation from loved ones or through the stigma

attached by co-ethnics to having been trafficked.[12] Focus group women voice a particular dislike for change as it removes trusted social relationships established post-trafficking. Focus group women felt safer knowing there are health professionals and project staff in their neighbourhood alert to their circumstances. New faces mean having to 'start at the beginning' and recount a 'difficult story' in a 'foreign tongue' to 'yet more strangers', exampled in new GPs, health visitors and community psychiatric nurses. Consequently, any disruption or change in continuity unsettles and unnerves women.

Continuity, however, is not solely valued for increasing feelings of safety. Women also value continuity of care for its properties of social inclusion. All women talk about family and friends back home as important sources of social support, especially in the raising of children. Continuity fosters opportunities to build social networks which, in turn, actively engender feelings of connectedness and belonging with the host community. As illustrated by this focus group woman (smuggled out of northern Africa and trafficked en route to England):

> 'My handler just dumped me – no money, no papers, no nothing! It was winter and I walked down the street in the freezing cold and wet wearing sandals and everyone stared at me. But I was given help and slowly I got to know these people and they got to know my situation and that's when I started to feel safe, to belong. Then they needed my bed, so they moved me to [a different region] and I felt unsafe, like an outsider, and had to start all over again.'

Losses in safety and social belonging cause women to view disruptions in health and social support as oppressive and as continued exploitation. Focus group women describe the effects of disruption as 'more persecution', 'big upheaval', 'not needed upset' and 'exploitation on top of exploitation'. A Somalian woman described each of her internal movements within the UK as a 'second' and 'third exile', given the lack of other discernible refugees in each of the new towns she was moved to.

In contrast, women with a more stable experience of social support view the future more positively. With the continuous support and encouragement of their NGO's, several women began to adapt and slowly rebuild their lives. Although women describe going outside their refuge as 'scary', 'difficult', 'lonely' and 'strange', many acquired new skills which brought them a social life and increased their chances for economic independence.

> 'I think they [project staff] are very good. If someone pushes you…now look at me. I know how to get bus to the swimming baths, which bus I need to buy something down the market. This opportunity gives you power to go forward, have future.' (SSI-3: Indian woman: trafficked for marriage and labour)

[12] Co-ethnics refer to persons of the same ethnicity. Given the stigma attached to trafficking for sexual exploitation and / or prostitution, co-ethnic migrants and refugees often disassociate themselves from trafficked co-ethnics.

> 'I started thinking, I can't work but I can maybe study or do something to get out of the house. So I started volunteering and now I'm on a language and a computer course. When I came to this country, I never touch a computer. Now I learn 'cos I will need it when I have work.' (SSI-4: Somalian woman: smuggled, then trafficked for labour)

> 'I finish training as beautician last year…Don't know exactly, but maybe gonna get jobs doing hairdressing. I been in a couple of competitions!' (SSI-2: Ukrainian woman trafficked for sex)

Discussion

Neither the Convention nor the EU Directive addresses the longer-term needs of trafficked victims, making this an important topic for future policy investment and research. Women found themselves reliant upon and grateful to NGOs for the support and encouragement necessary in taking new opportunities and slowly rebuilding their lives post-trafficking.

> 'Staff always say just do it. Why you don't do it? The project rules [supporting integration with the local community] opened lot of doors for me.' (Focus group member)

Facing a Culture of Disbelief

Most focus group members, and all SSI participants, mention that not being believed impedes emotional recovery post-trafficking. Being doubted or disbelieved makes women feel responsible for their predicament and raises a variety of negative emotions towards officials handling their cases. Most typically, these emotions are ones of feeling 'let down', 'all alone', 'anxious', 'frustrated' and 'angry':

> 'When I was in police cell, I have heard people [Police station personnel] say to me, you should have stayed in Turkey. I think, if this has not happened to you, you shouldn't say you should do this or that. I'm just ignoring these people. They make me angry because they don't understand the whole situation.' (SSI-2: Ukrainian woman trafficked for sex)

Women generally doubt the ability of the Police and Immigration Services to protect them whilst formally investigating them. However, as illustrated in the words of the Ukrainian woman above, this doubt is commonly rooted in personal experience of corruption prior to arriving in the UK.

> 'When I was in Albania, I was in a hotel and watched by two men with Kalashnikovs. At night, just to scare us, they are shooting into the air. Just to show us they are the mens, you know. They have the power, they are the Mafia, they can do whatever they want. Even the policemens come to join them, have a cup of tea. What can you do with that? When I was here in this country, I was scared of policeman.' (SSI-2)

Women's experience of being disbelieved appears strongest where exploitations involve prostitution. SSI-2 above, who succeeded in escaping her trafficker, describes her

misidentification as trafficked and her experience of being judged as a prostitute in this way:

> 'They never asked me what I think. Only told me what they think. Told me to go to Home Office for asylum! I think they saw me on my own, dressed for sex and thought I was foreign prostitute...I never made it to go…I was found by men and returned to my owner [trafficker]. The police knew nothing.'

Other women trafficked for forced marriage, or tricked into a fake marriage (often a front for prostitution), also talk about feeling judged and misunderstood as genuine victims of sex trafficking. Amongst focus group members, women recall being told:

> 'You should have learnt the language first.'
>
> 'Foreigners think it's all roses over here.'
>
> 'What kind of marriage did we expect?'

Discussion

One explanation for women's misidentification lies in the discursive/moral rift between prostitution as violence against women (Jeffreys, 1997) and sex as legitimate work with rights to health and safety, including union protection (Doezema, 2005; Lopes, 2006).[13] On one side of this rift, trafficked women eschewing any consent to prostitution become 'Madonnas'- innocent of blame and worthy of trafficking protection and support. On the other, trafficked migrants – often sex workers in their country of origin and with no design to exit prostitution - become the guilty and undeserving 'whores' in trafficking-related assessments and provision (Doezema, 1998:47). Since the UK does not recognise a sex work agenda (Sanders and Campbell, 2007; Home Office, 2011), VoTs face questioning and sanctions over their consent in prostitution related activity (as happens when victims are discovered during raids on brothels and massage parlors).

In discussing ways of influencing this culture of disbelief, women support giving a victim statement to a trusted NGO staff member in a safe environment – typically a room in their own project. Several women expressed concern for 'people like us' (without papers), held in detention centres without access to NGO statement takers or their support. In terms of policy progression, the EU Directive (EUP, Article 12) introduces some new protections for victims who give evidence in Court. These prioritise VoT access to witness protection programmes and installing technological safeguards, for example, court room screens and external video links shielding the victim from the perpetrator. Additionally, Article 12 directs the Courts to adopt new rules of examination which ban gendered questioning, for example, over the victim's private life or clothing. Some members of the focus group suggest 'state officials' (that is Police, Border Agency staff, social workers) should be trained in Human Rights, as per the leading anti-trafficking groups, exampled in La Strada, Stop the Traffik, and Anti-Slavery International.

[13] See also the Global Alliance Against Trafficking (GAATW) website: www.gaatw.org

Losing Rights to Family and Children

Basically, women are happy with the quality of information and legal advice supplied by asylum solicitors and a range of anti-trafficking networks. The one exception to this is the lack of legal process and legal aid supporting a women's right to be with her children. Women trafficked into a forced marriage feel especially at risk of losing their children. The main reason for this is women's lack of papers. When a forced marriage breaks down – as happened to a number of participants – the disposable wife (unlike the husband and child) has no documents proving her immigration status:

> 'When I came to Heathrow, my British husband and his brother and his sister came to met me and when I got my bags I just get in car. My sister-in-law say where your passport? I was really shocked and I give it to her. When I arrived to my new home, my mother-in-law say same thing, where is your passport? You know, now I know this is really important - what it means to give away your passport. I couldn't show who I was, why I belong here.' (SSI-3: Indian woman: trafficked for marriage and labour)

Women who have been trafficked into a forced marriage live in real fear of being deported without their British-born children. As exampled in the unfolding narrative of SSI-3:

> 'When my daughter was 16-17 month old, an Indian neighbour, she asked me if I was alright and she told me my mother-in-law planning to send me back to India and keep my daughter here. She said where your passport? I say I don't have my passport. What about your visa. I say I don't know anything about that. She said, then I could be sent back and my daughter kept here. I cry.'

Women trafficked for reasons other than marriage voice distress over the prospect of rebuilding a life post-trafficking without children left behind in a home country:

> 'Real suffering is not being able to tell some-one about the things I have lost. My son and daughter are home in Africa. In suffering in silence, I'm never going to get them back again. This is what I want the most – help to have my children here with me.' (SSI-5: Gambian woman: trafficked for sex)

> 'I can't move on with my life. I'm stuck! I can do job but can't do new family. I'm meeting some guy and am three years with him and I don't want to be pregnant, I don't want to! I need my family here first and, then, I need time to get to know my children. It's gonna be very hard. I didn't been home in years.' (SSI-2: Ukrainian woman trafficked for sex)

Discussion

None of the provisions contained in the Convention or the EU Directive provides for this aspect of family unification/reunification. The Convention raises the desirability of reuniting a child with its family where a child is trafficked, but not where the parent has been trafficked (Chapter 111, Article 10 (4).

Women's narratives also raise issues pertinent to the transposition phase of the EU Directive. Although the EU Directive (EUP, 2011: paragraph 11) recognises forced marriage as a trafficking exploitation, the UK currently differentiates forced marriage and trafficking (Poppy, 2009). The Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) builds distinct criminal cases on a unitary act – consent - using existing laws strengthened by the 2007 Forced Marriage (Civil Protection) Act. The FMU then actions a raft of non-trafficking related services for these recognised victims of a forced marriage. A wife trafficked into a forced marriage (where deceit or coercion is used to move her away from home for sexual / domestic servitude as a wife: also termed a servile marriage**)** currently falls between two systems. The Trafficking 'National Referral Mechanism' locates forced marriage and marriage-related exploitations under the FMU service umbrella and the FMU has no remit for working with trafficked women. Participants trafficked into a forced marriage become disposable once their usefulness (for bearing children, caring for a disabled husband, or earning from prostitution) wane. When this happens, women lose welfare entitlements accessible inside the marriage, have no independent recourse to public funds, and risk deportation without spousal or work visas proving their eligibility to be in the UK.

A final policy omission (though not one directly affecting participant women) surrounds the trafficking of babies under existing legislation. In the UK, a prosecution for baby trafficking is possible under the Asylum and Immigration Act (2004: section 4) if a pregnant VoT is induced. However, this legal cover does not extend to women trafficked into the UK in order to supply new born babies for benefit fraud (House of Commons, 2008-9: Evidence 252:10). For reasons stated above, the gendered implications of trafficking on motherhood are a critical topic for future research and policy investment.

Conclusion

This paper has brought some voices of formerly trafficked women into the discourse on policy support. In their position as policy subjects, women explain how policies (as in 'no recourse') and aspects of policy delivery (as in changes to health providers and social support networks; and a perceived culture of disbelief) are experienced as replacing trafficking-related exploitation and control of their lives. Crucially, participant women identify policy gaps in reuniting trafficked mothers with children left behind in home countries, and in allowing trafficked wives rights to children born during a forced marriage. Participant experiences also showcase the criticality of identifying forced marriage within a context of trafficking as a legitimate trafficking crime. Against this policy backdrop of restrictive practices, women display resilience and agency in rebuilding social and economic networks lost through trafficking. With the support of NGO projects, women commence the difficult process of adaptation (building a new social life) and becoming productive (via education and training), vital in restoring autonomy and independence stripped away by trafficking practices. Women's qualitative contributions carry value for policy roll-out on the Convention, the EU Directive, and on the delivery of trafficking services (contracted to the Salvation Army since 2011). Ultimately, they and their remarkable voices show that survivors have much to add to the discourse of policy support for women trafficked into the UK.

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